

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 1133

As Passed House:
February 12, 2004

Title: An act relating to property tax statistics.

Brief Description: Requiring county assessors to submit an annual property tax report to the department of revenue.

Sponsors: By Representatives Carrell, Cairnes, Kristiansen, Hinkle, McMahan and Mielke.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Finance: 1/28/03, 3/7/03 [DP].

Floor Activity:

Passed House: 3/14/03, 96-0.

Floor Activity:

Passed House: 2/12/04, 93-0.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Requires county assessors to provide information to the Department of Revenue on property taxes levied within the county, including information on the amount of banked levy capacity.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 9 members: Representatives Gombosky, Chair; McIntire, Vice Chair; Cairnes, Ranking Minority Member; Orcutt, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Ahern, Conway, Morris, Roach and Santos.

Staff: Rick Peterson (786-7150).

Background:

Property taxes are imposed by state and local governments. The county assessor determines assessed value for each property. The county assessor also calculates the tax rate necessary to raise the correct amount of property taxes for each taxing district. The assessor calculates the rate so the individual district rate limit, the district revenue limit, and the aggregate rate limits are all satisfied. The assessor delivers the county tax roll to the treasurer. The county treasurer collects property taxes based on the tax roll starting February 15 each year.

The annual increase in district property taxes is restricted by the property tax revenue limit. This limit requires the district's tax rate to be reduced as necessary to limit the total amount of property taxes to the highest property tax amount in the three most recent years, plus 1 percent, plus an amount equal to last year's tax rate multiplied by the value of new construction in the district. This limit acts to reduce district rates below the maximum rate allowed for the district.

There are some exceptions to the district revenue limit. The district's revenue limit may be exceeded upon a majority vote of the people. This exception to the limit is called a "lid lift." Another exception allows districts, other than the state, that have voluntarily imposed property taxes below the maximum to calculate the revenue limit as if the district had imposed the maximum. The difference between the actual tax amount and the maximum is called "banked levy capacity."

Summary of Bill:

County assessors are required to provide a report on property taxes levied within the county to the Department of Revenue. The report will include the assessed value, levy rate, and levy amount for each property taxing district within the county. The report will contain details of the calculations for the district revenue limits, including information on the amount of banked levy capacity.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

Testimony For: The bill is looking at the issue of banked capacity. Some property tax increases are deferred and can be levied in the future. About \$120 million is available in banked capacity. We really don't know how much is out there that can be imposed. Some districts are increasing their taxes by more than 1 percent by using banked capacity. This bill will let us know the potential.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: Representative Carrell, prime sponsor; and Michelle Hagens, Washington State Association of County Officials (for Scott Noble, King County Assessor)